

# FANTASIA AND FUGUE

ON THE CHORALE "AD NOS AD SALUTAREM UNDAM"

*Franz Liszt*

# VARIATIONS FROM SYMPHONIE GOTHIQUE

*Charles Widor*

(Opus 70)



Jeanne Demessieux Organ



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Liszt: Fantasia & Fugue  
Widor: Sym. Gothique

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# LISZT

## FANTASIA AND FUGUE

on the Chorale "Ad Nos Ad Salutarem Undam"

JEANNE DEMESSIEUX, organ

This Fantasia and Fugue, composed in 1850, was the first of Liszt's many organ works, and is also the largest in scale. It is based on a chorale from the first act of Meyerbeer's opera, *Le Prophète*, sung by three Anabaptists, who call on the people to seek re-baptism in the healing water. The theme is Meyerbeer's own, and not, as has sometimes been stated, a traditional chorale. Liszt dedicated his Fantasia and Fugue to Meyerbeer; it was first published in 1852 as No. 4 of Liszt's "Illustrations du Prophète", and first performed in 1855 by the well-known organist A. Winterberger at the consecration of the organ in the cathedral of Merseburg, a town in Saxony not far from Leipzig. The work also exists in a version for piano duet, made by Liszt himself; and in 1897 Busoni published a transcription for piano solo, which is frequently performed to-day.

Though designed to be played without a break, the work is divided into three main sections; the Fantasia proper, a central slow section, and the final Fugue. The Fantasia begins at once with the first phrase of Meyerbeer's theme; after this has been repeated, part of the second phrase is heard, but the theme as a whole does not appear till the beginning of the slow section, and the Fantasia is based entirely on the fragments already heard. These are treated in a variety of ways, and with great ingenuity; the mood is mainly violent and agitated, but interspersed with quieter passages. A great deal of the writing is extremely brilliant, and

even pianistic, while still remaining perfectly effective as organ music; there is a considerable use of double pedalling, and other devices. Eventually the excitement dies down, and recitative-like passages lead to the slow section. This is written in F sharp major. It begins *Adagio* with a complete statement of the chorale, quiet and unaccompanied. This is repeated with three-part harmony; then follows a long meditation on the theme, particularly on its second phrase. The atmosphere is calm and reflective throughout, and the whole section is one of Liszt's most beautiful inspirations. Finally a slightly altered version of the first phrase of the theme leads the tonality away from F sharp to a close on a pedal A flat; over this the manuals burst in with a fortissimo diminished seventh chord, and the final section begins with a short and brilliant introductory passage based on the opening of the chorale. This leads straight into the Fugue; the chorale theme now appears *Allegretto con moto* in 3/4 time, and is exposed in a perfectly orthodox manner in four parts. After this, however, all resemblance to a classical fugue ends; the treatment becomes freer and freer, and the theme is subjected to all kinds of variation. It eventually appears in its original 4/4 time (as in the Fantasia) under running semiquavers, and gradually works up to a powerful climax. Finally it appears *fff* in the major with a new harmonisation, and a majestic *Adagio* passage ends a work which must rank among Liszt's most important and inspired creations.


# WIDOR

## Variations from

### SYMPHONIE GOTHIQUE, Op. 70

Charles-Marie Widor (1845-1937) was one of the most important of the later nineteenth-century French organ composers; he was organist at St. Sulpice, Paris and later Organ Professor at the Conservatoire. He wrote numerous compositions in all forms, including orchestral and chamber music, opera and ballet—he conducted his symphonic poem *Une Nuit de Valpurgis* at a Philharmonic concert in London in 1888—but he is now remembered only by his organ works, which include a number of symphonies for the instrument. No. 9, the 'Gothic' Symphony, was published in 1895, and consists of four movements, of which the Variations form the finale. The main theme, a kind of *canto fermo*, is heard at the beginning of the movement; in the first variation it is combined with a counter-subject which assumes a good deal of importance during the movement. In the second variation the main theme appears in canon between the upper manual and the pedals, and several other variations, notably the third and fifth, are based on canonic devices. The later variations become more and more brilliant, and lead to a powerful climax with the main theme in the bass; the final section returns to the simple style of the opening, the 'Gothic' element being provided by some use of modal scales.

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**LISZT: FANTASIA AND FUGUE**

Based on the Chorale "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam"

1st Mov.: Moderato

2nd Mov.: Adagio

JEANNE DEMESSIEUX—Organ

ARL.1427

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**WIDOR: VARIATIONS from 'SYMPHONIE  
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